

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light of the amendments and remarks herein.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-3 and 8-12 will be pending. By this amendment, claims 1-3 have been amended, claims 4-7 have been canceled, and claims 8-12 have been added. No new matter has been added.

Objections to the Specification

In Section 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to informalities. The paragraphs of the Specification containing the objected informalities have been deleted, amended, or replaced. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that these objections be withdrawn.

§112 Rejection of Claims 1-7

In Section 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 1-3 have been amended, and claims 4-7 have been canceled, thereby obviating the rejection.

§102 Rejection of Claims 1-7

In Section 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Matsuzaki *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,289,314; hereinafter referred to as "Matsuzaki").

In the Background section of the Specification, it was disclosed that "[i]f a user possesses two or more information processing apparatuses, he/she must purchase content and settle its usage charge for each information processing apparatus, which causes a problem ..." *Page 1, lines 19-21 of the Specification*. To solve this problem, embodiments of the present invention provides that one of the information processing apparatuses should perform proxy account settlement with a content provider for the other information processing apparatuses so that the other apparatuses can receive media contents directly from the content provider without having to perform additional account settlements.

In particular, the structure of an information processing apparatus of independent claim 1, as presented herein, includes an "information processing apparatus which is connected to other information processing apparatuses and which decrypts and uses encrypted information under the control of a control apparatus". The information processing apparatus includes "transmission means for transmitting appropriate proxy account settlement information to said other information processing apparatuses; first reception means for receiving accounting information from said other information processing apparatuses, said accounting information related to payment of media contents received directly by said other information processing apparatuses from said control apparatus, wherein said accounting information is generated in accordance with said proxy account settlement information; sending means for sending said accounting information received by said first reception means to said control apparatus; second reception means for receiving registration conditions from said control apparatus, said registration conditions prepared based on the results of account settlement performed according to said accounting information; and control means for controlling the operation of said information processing apparatus, based on said registration conditions." *Claim 1 (emphasis added)*.

Matsuzaki discloses servers 2 (see FIG. 1 of Matsuzaki) that receive pay information from transmitting stations TS. However, each of the Matsuzaki's servers settles its own account with the received pay information. Thus, the Matsuzaki's server 2 fails to teach or suggest performing proxy account settlement so that the other servers can receive contents directly from the transmitting station(s) without having to perform account settlements. Furthermore, the Matsuzaki's server fails to disclose receiving account information from the other servers so that the server can perform the proxy account settlement for these other servers.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it is submitted that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by the teachings of Matsuzaki. Furthermore, since independent claims 2 and 3 are information processing method and computer program, whose limitations are substantially similar to the limitations of claim 1, claims 2 and 3 should also be allowable. Claims 4-7 have been canceled. Accordingly, it is submitted that the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-7 based upon 35 U.S.C. §102(e) has been overcome by the present remarks and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Newly-added Claims

Newly-added claims 8-12 disclose an information processing system including "at least one information processing apparatus and a control apparatus configured to control the flow of said media contents from said content provider to said at least one information processing apparatus". *Claim 8 (emphasis added)*. The system further comprises a master information processing apparatus that includes the similar limitations disclosed in claim 1.

Specifically, the "master information processing apparatus [is] in communication with said at least one information processing apparatus and said control apparatus". The master

information processing apparatus includes "a first transmitter to transmit appropriate proxy account settlement information to said at least one information processing apparatus; a first receiver to receive accounting information from said at least one information processing apparatus, said accounting information related to payment for media contents received directly by said other information processing apparatuses from said content provider, wherein said accounting information generated in accordance with said proxy account settlement information, and used to perform account settlement with said control apparatus; a second transmitter to transmit said accounting information received from said first receiver to said control apparatus; and a second receiver to receive registration conditions from said control apparatus, said registration conditions prepared in accordance with said account settlement performed with said control apparatus." *Claim 8 (emphasis added).*

Based on the foregoing discussion, it is submitted that claims 8-12 should be allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, entry of this amendment, and the allowance of this application with claims 1-3 and 8-12 are respectfully solicited.

In regard to the claims amended herein and throughout the prosecution of this application, it is submitted that these claims, as originally presented, were patentably distinct over the prior art of record, and that these claims were in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112. Changes that have been made to these claims were not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §§101, 102, 103 or 112. Rather, these changes were made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicant is entitled.

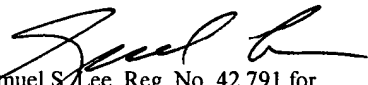
In the event that additional cooperation in this case may be helpful to complete its prosecution, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number written below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with the above-identified application to Deposit Account 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

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